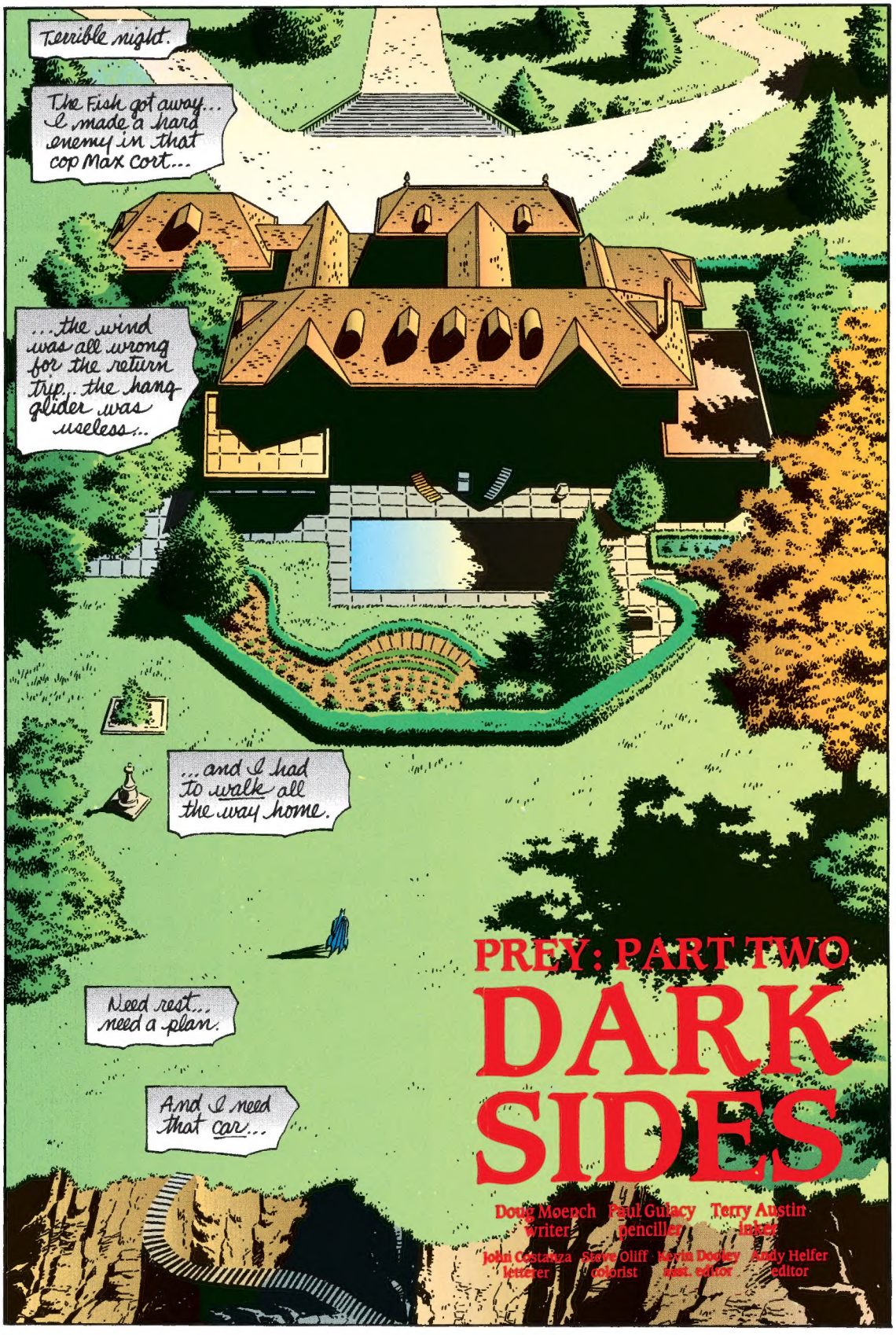
BATMAN
LEGENDS OF THE
DARK KNIGHT
NO 12 NOV 90
150 CAN 185
BROCK'S BEER
PREY
DOUG MOENCH • PAUL GULACY • TERRY AUSTIN
PART TWO OF FIVE


Terrible night.
The Fish got away... I made a hard enemy in that cop Max Cort...
...the wind was all wrong for the return trip. the hang glider was useless...
...and I had to walk all the way home.
Need rest... need a plan.
And I need that car...

PREY: PART TWO

DARK SIDES

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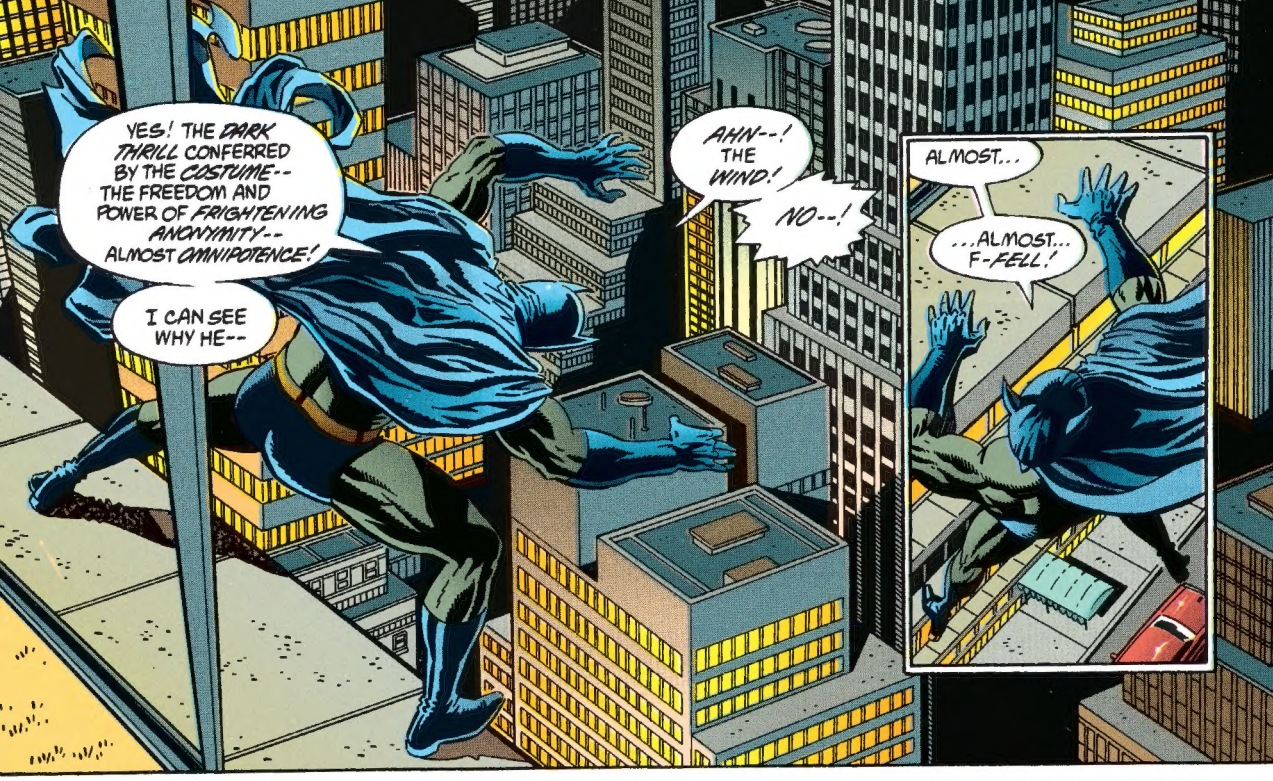
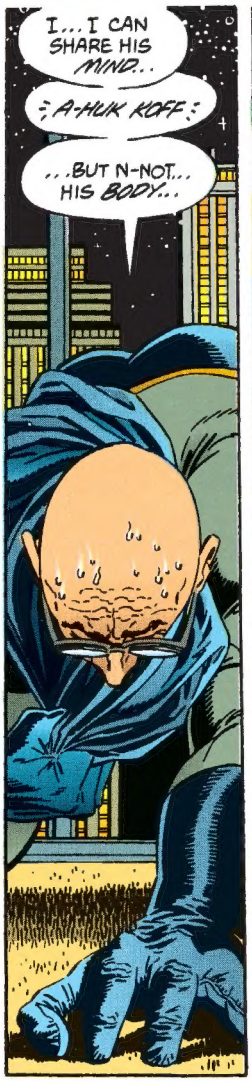
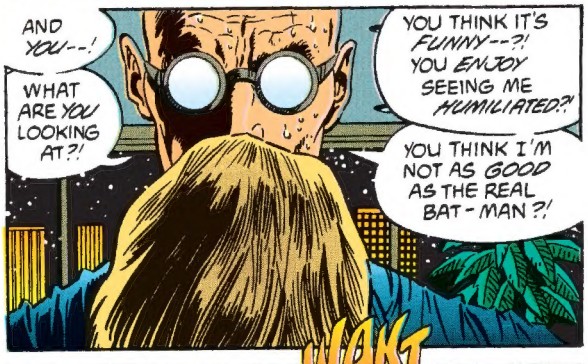
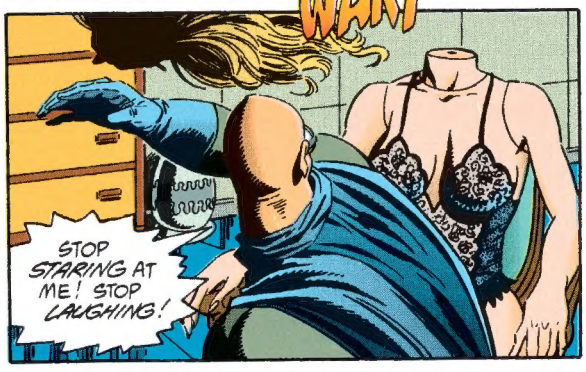
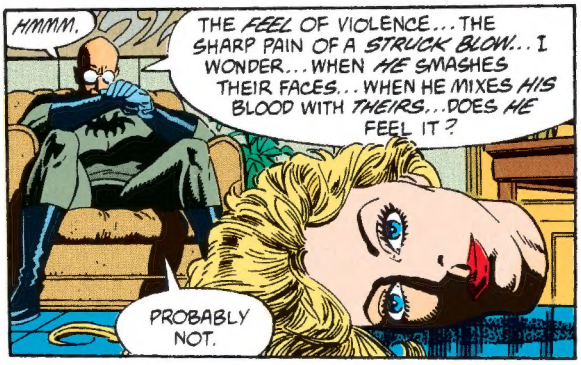

YES! THE DARK THRILL CONFERRED BY THE COSTUME-- THE FREEDOM AND POWER OF FRIGHTENING ANONYMITY-- ALMOST OMNIPOTENCE!
I CAN SEE WHY HE--
AHN--! THE WIND!
NO--!
ALMOST...
...ALMOST... F-FELL!


I... I CAN SHARE HIS MIND..
;A-HUK KOFF;
..BUT N-NOT... HIS BODY...

I CAN KNOW HOW IT FEELS TO BE THE BAT-MAN PSYCHOLOGICALLY.. BUT NOT... NOT PHYSICALLY.
GOD, H-HOW I ENVY HIM... HOW I HATE HIM...

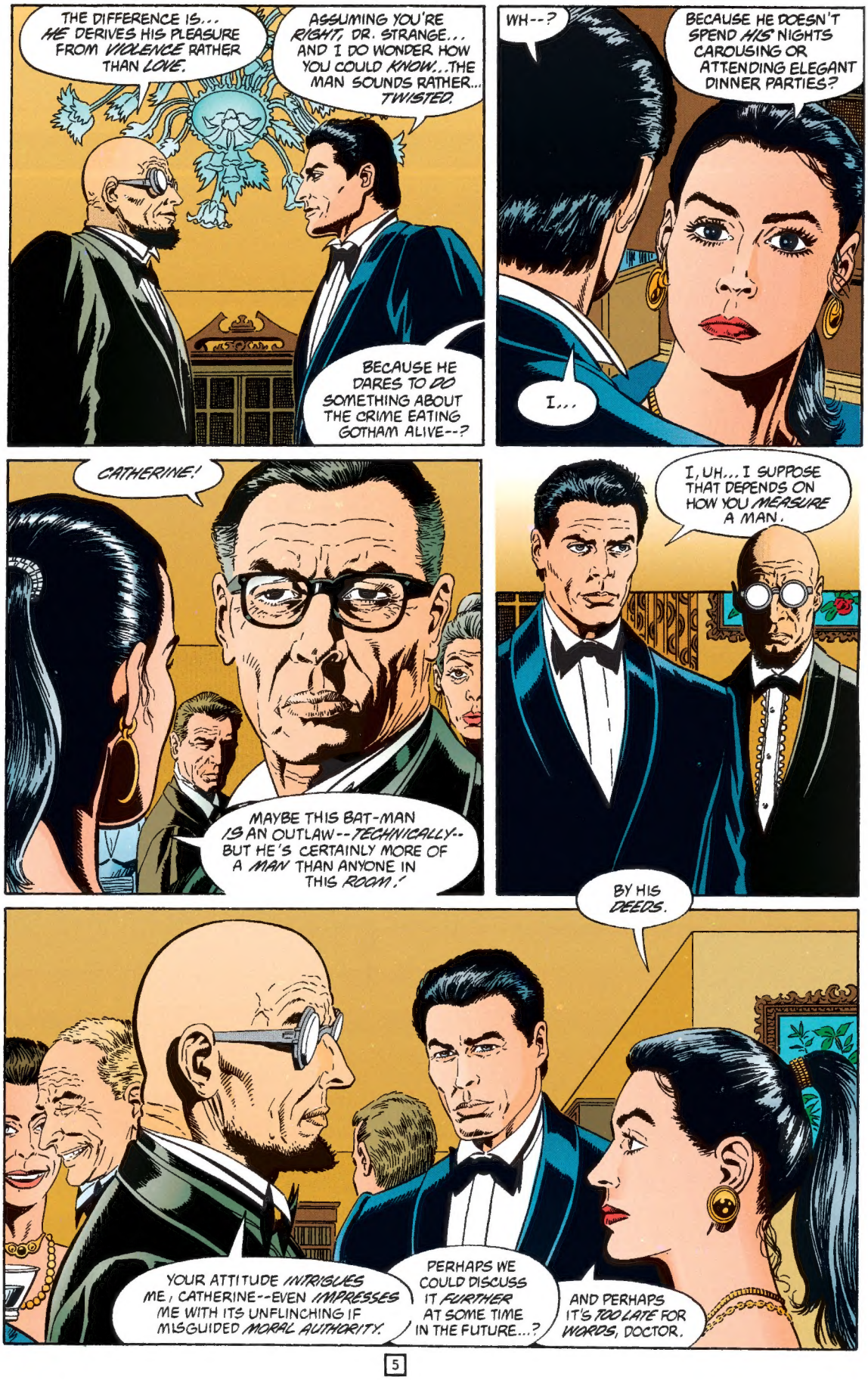

AND YOU--!
WHAT ARE YOU LOOKING AT?!
YOU THINK IT'S FUNNY--?! YOU ENJOY SEEING ME HUMILIATED?!
YOU THINK I'M NOT AS GOOD AS THE REAL BAT-MAN?!

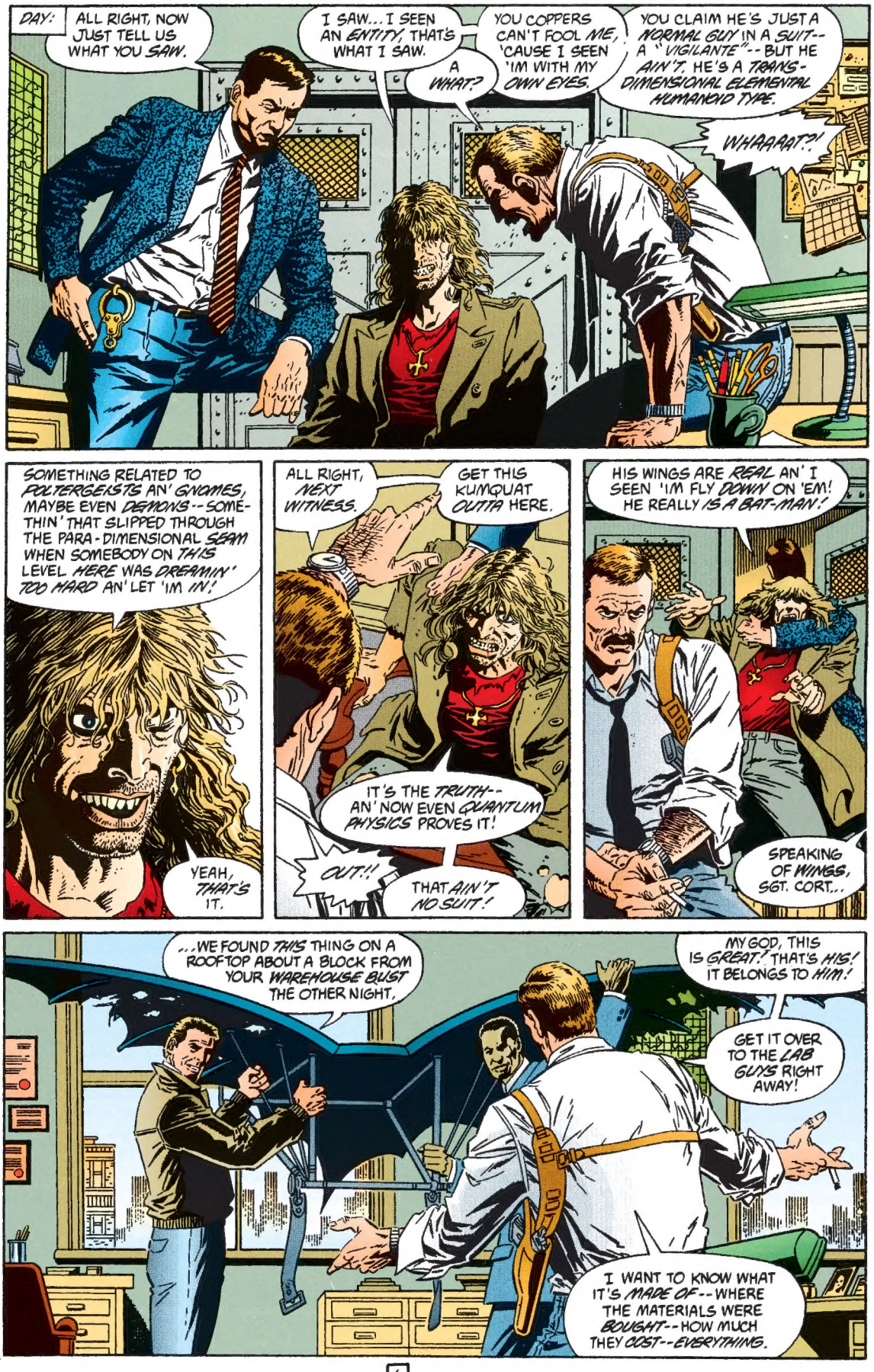

WAK!
STOP STARING AT ME! STOP LAUGHING!


HMMM.
THE FEEL OF VIOLENCE... THE SHARP PAIN OF A STRUCK BLOW... I WONDER... WHEN HE SMASHES THEIR FACES... WHEN HE MIXES HIS BLOOD WITH THEIRS... DOES HE FEEL IT?
PROBABLY NOT.

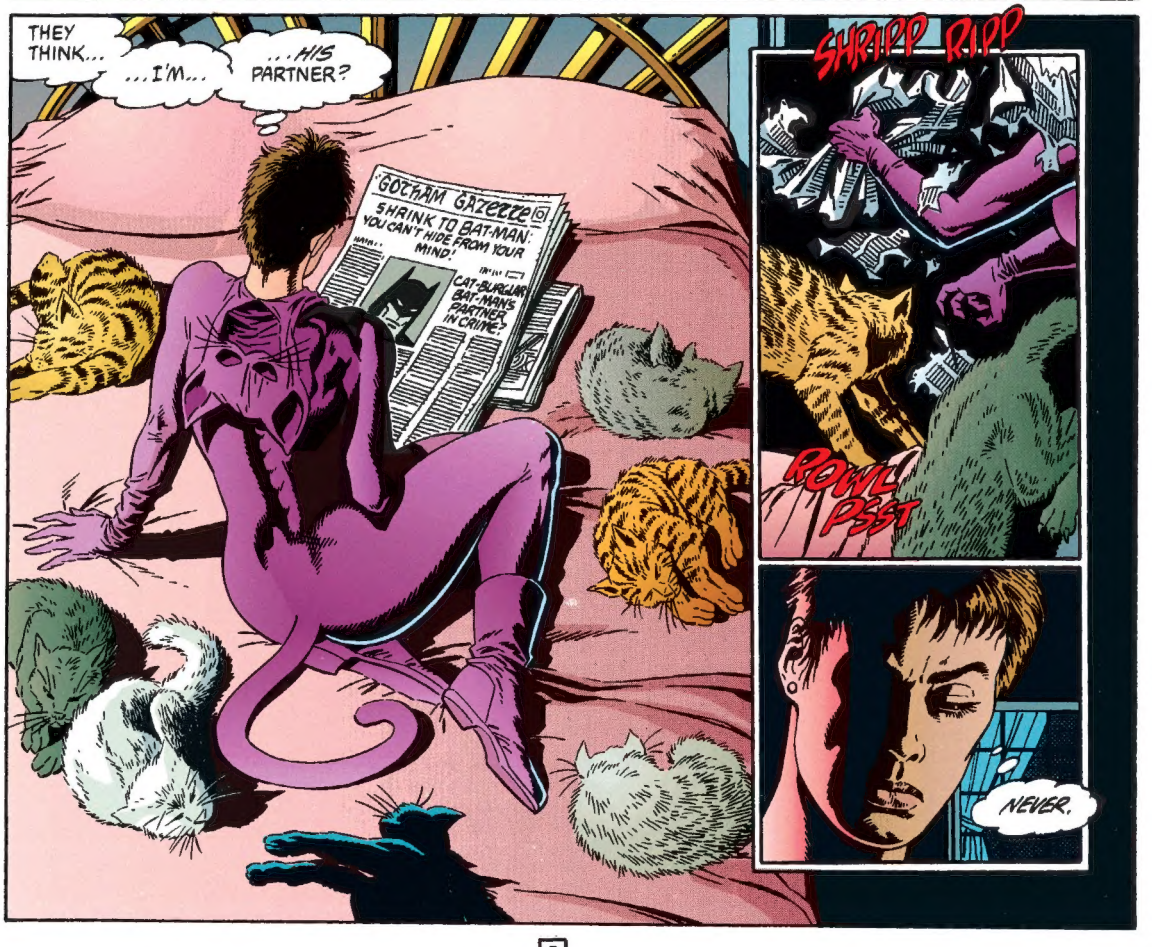
I feel exhausted
Need something not in my belly...
I SAW YOU THROUGH THE WINDOW, SIR.
WILL FIRST-AID BE REQUIRED?
NOT THIS TIME, ALFRED.
I WAS LUCKY TONIGHT... ON THAT SCORE.
THEN ASIDE FROM THE ABSENCE OF MORTAL WOUNDS... WAS IT A BAD NIGHT?
A DISASTER.
I CAN'T GO ON LIKE THIS, ALFRED... NOT AGAINST THE CRIMINALS AND THE POLICE.
I'VE GOT TO FIND A WAY TO MAKE PLAYING THIS GAME LESS DRAINING.
THEN I SHALL REFRAIN FROM SAYING I TOLD YOU SO, SIR, AND INSTEAD PRESENT THE DAY'S MAIL.
FIRST, THE USUAL INVITATIONS...
TRASH THEM-- MY NIGHTS ARE BOOKED.
...INCLUDING ONE FROM THE MAYOR-- A SMALL DINNER PARTY?
HNH.
THAT ONE YOU CAN ACCEPT.
I'VE ALREADY TAKEN THE LIBERTY OF DOING SO, SIR-- AND IN THE PROCESS OF CONFIRMING WITH THE MAYOR'S PERSONAL SECRETARY...
...I HAPPENED TO DIVINE THAT ONE OF THE OTHER GUESTS WILL BE A CERTAIN--

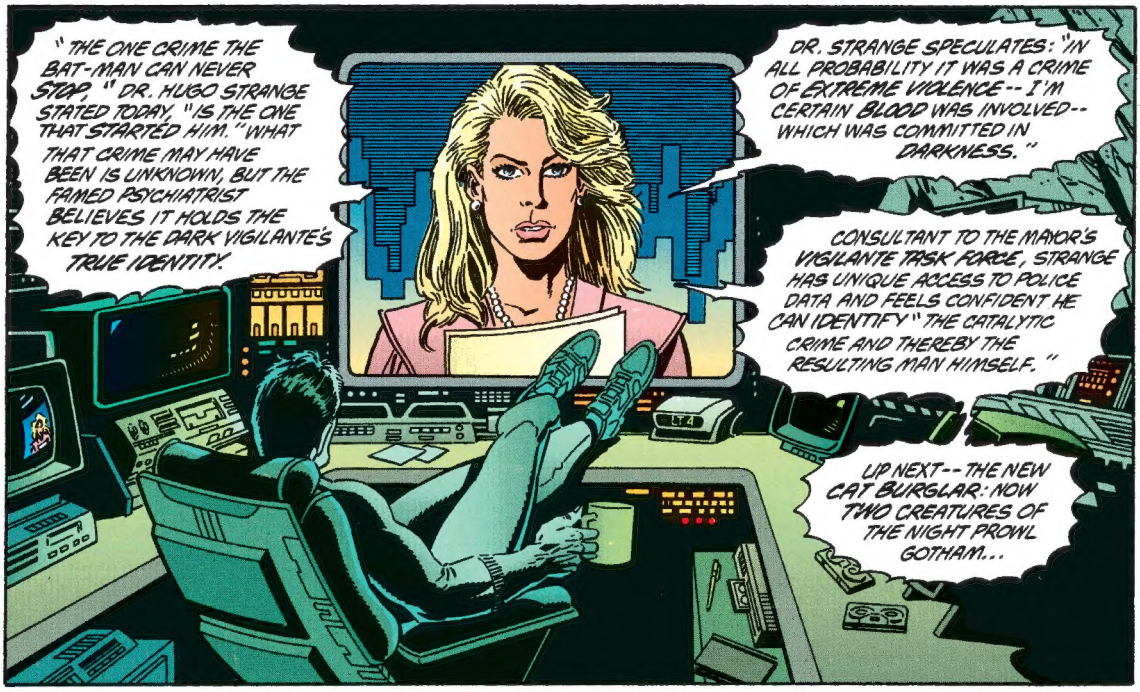
"--DR. HUGO STRANGE."
SO TELL ME, DR. STRANGE... JUST HOW WILL YOU "USE THE MEDIA TO CRACK THE BAT-MAN"?
THROUGH HIS EGO, MR. MAYOR.
I PLAN TO EMPLOY A GRADUALLY ESCALATING MEDIA MIND-GAME TO GET UNDER HIS PSYCHE'S SKIN..
THE MAN, YOU SEE, IS QUITE OBVIOUSLY VAIN AND NARCISSISTIC.
YOU DON'T LIKE THE WINE, MR. WAYNE?
AH...THE TRUTH IS, I LIKE IT TOO MUCH..
I'M STILL FEELING THE EFFECTS OF LAST NIGHT'S GRAPE, I'M AFRAID.
SO IT'S WATER FOR ME-- UNTIL MIDNIGHT AT THE EARLIEST.
YOU'RE INCORRIGIBLE, WAYNE...
...AND DON'T GET TOO CLOSE TO HIM, CATHERINE.
FATHER...
I DON'T WANT MY DAUGHTER BECOMING ANOTHER CONQUEST.
I ASSURE YOU, SIR, WE WERE JUST--
YES, YES, BUT TELL ME, WAYNE-- HOW DO YOU FEEL ABOUT THIS VIGILANTE RUNNING AMOK THROUGH THE GOTHAM NIGHT?
ME--?
WELL, I'M AFRAID I FIND THE SUBJECT ALIEN, MR. MAYOR, INASMUCH AS I DEVOTE THE NIGHT TO OTHER PURSUITS...
BESIDES, I UNDERSTAND DR. STRANGE HERE IS THE EXPERT ON MATTERS BAT-RELATED.
QUITE.
BUT DON'T THINK HE DOESN'T DERIVE THE SAME PLEASURE FROM THE NIGHT THAT WE ALL DO, MR. WAYNE.
IN FACT, I'D SAY THE DARKNESS PROVIDES A CERTAIN ECSTASY FOR HIM--
-- SOMETHING HE CRAVES WITH PRIMAL URGENCY...


THE DIFFERENCE IS... HE DERIVES HIS PLEASURE FROM VIOLENCE RATHER THAN LOVE.
ASSUMING YOU'RE RIGHT, DR. STRANGE... AND I DO WONDER HOW YOU COULD KNOW...THE MAN SOUNDS RATHER... TWISTED.
BECAUSE HE DARES TO DO SOMETHING ABOUT THE CRIME EATING GOTHAM ALIVE--?
WH--?
BECAUSE HE DOESN'T SPEND HIS NIGHTS CAROUSING OR ATTENDING ELEGANT DINNER PARTIES?
I...
CATHERINE!
MAYBE THIS BAT-MAN IS AN OUTLAW--TECHNICALLY-- BUT HE'S CERTAINLY MORE OF A MAN THAN ANYONE IN THIS ROOM.!
I, UH... I SUPPOSE THAT DEPENDS ON HOW YOU MEASURE A MAN.
BY HIS DEEDS.
YOUR ATTITUDE INTRIGUES ME, CATHERINE--EVEN IMPRESSES ME WITH ITS UNFLINCHING IF MISGUIDED MORAL AUTHORITY.
PERHAPS WE COULD DISCUSS IT FURTHER AT SOME TIME IN THE FUTURE...?
AND PERHAPS IT'S TOO LATE FOR WORDS, DOCTOR.


DAY:
ALL RIGHT, NOW JUST TELL US WHAT YOU SAW.
I SAW... I SEEN AN ENTITY, THAT'S WHAT I SAW.
A WHAT?
YOU COPPERS CAN'T FOOL ME, 'CAUSE I SEEN 'IM WITH MY OWN EYES.
YOU CLAIM HE'S JUST A NORMAL GUY IN A SUIT-- A "VIGILANTE"-- BUT HE AIN'T. HE'S A TRANS-DIMENSIONAL ELEMENTAL HUMANOID TYPE.
WHAAAAT?!
SOMETHING RELATED TO POLTERGEISTS AN' GNOMES, MAYBE EVEN DEMONS-- SOMETHIN' THAT SLIPPED THROUGH THE PARA-DIMENSIONAL SEAM WHEN SOMEBODY ON THIS LEVEL HERE WAS DREAMIN' TOO HARD AN' LET 'IM IN!
YEAH, THAT'S IT.
ALL RIGHT, NEXT WITNESS.
GET THIS KUMQUAT OUTTA HERE.
IT'S THE TRUTH-- AN' NOW EVEN QUANTUM PHYSICS PROVES IT!
OUT!!
THAT AIN'T NO SUIT!
HIS WINGS ARE REAL AN' I SEEN 'IM FLY DOWN ON 'EM! HE REALLY IS A BAT-MAN!
SPEAKING OF WINGS, SGT. CORT...
...WE FOUND THIS THING ON A ROOFTOP ABOUT A BLOCK FROM YOUR WAREHOUSE BUST THE OTHER NIGHT.
MY GOD, THIS IS GREAT! THAT'S HIS! IT BELONGS TO HIM!
GET IT OVER TO THE LAB GUYS RIGHT AWAY!
I WANT TO KNOW WHAT IT'S MADE OF-- WHERE THE MATERIALS WERE BOUGHT-- HOW MUCH THEY COST-- EVERYTHING.

AND MAKE SURE A COPY OF THE FULL REPORT GETS TO DR. HUGO STRANGE.
WE'RE CLOSIN' IN, GUYS -- AND SOONER OR LATER WE'RE GONNA NAIL THAT BAT-SCUM! I CAN FEEL IT!
Maybe Max Cort wasn't the perfect choice.
He's even more hyper than I realized, and he truly hates the Batman.
It's becoming a crusade for him, and fanatics are dangerous.
Worst of all, linked with Hugo Strange...his brawn and energy will have a brain.

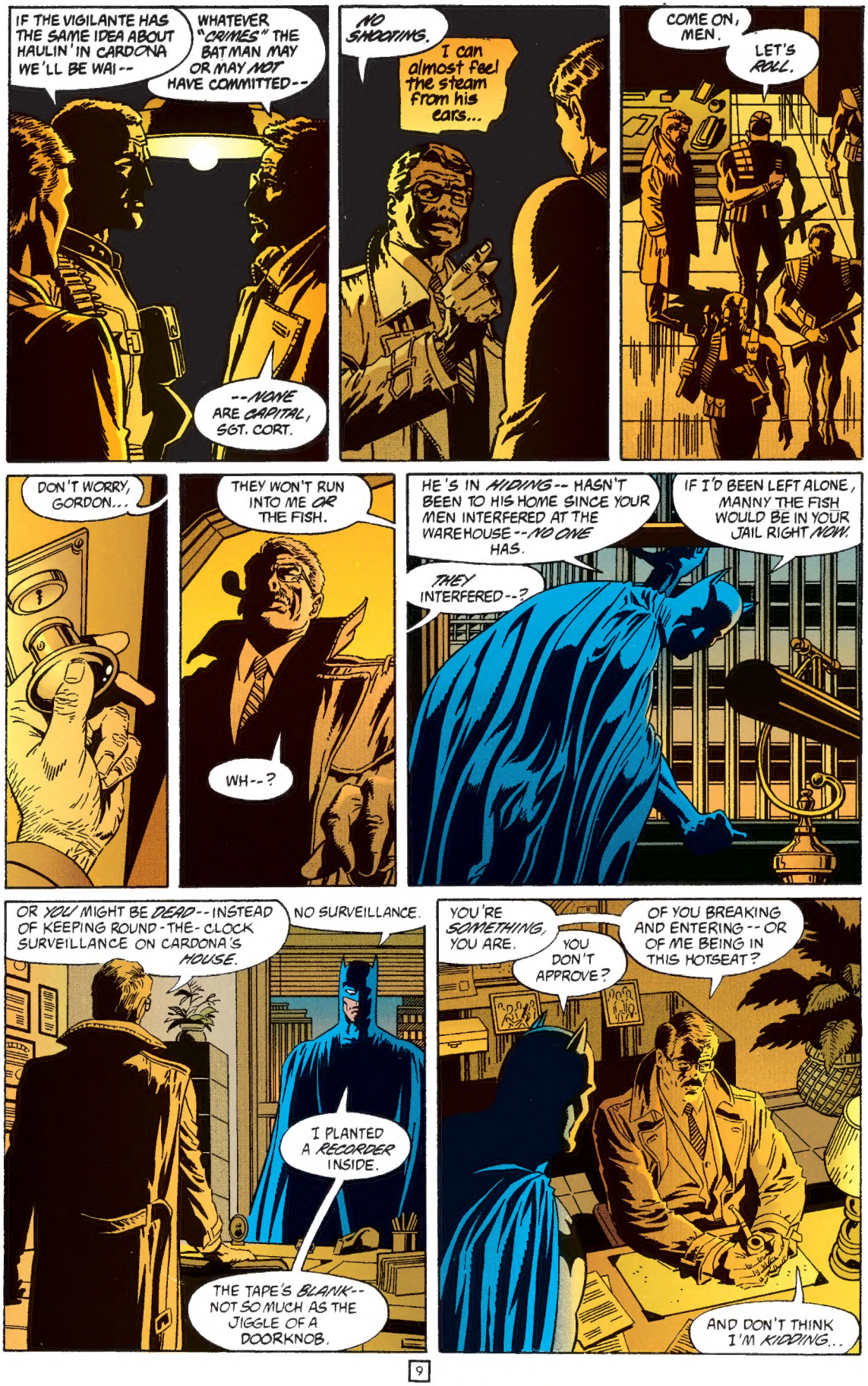

THEY THINK...
...I'M...
...HIS PARTNER?
GOTHAM GAZETTE
SHRINK TO BAT-MAN: YOU CAN'T HIDE FROM YOUR MIND!
CAT-BURGLAR BAT-MAN'S PARTNER IN CRIME?
SHRIPP RIPP
ROWL PSST
NEVER.

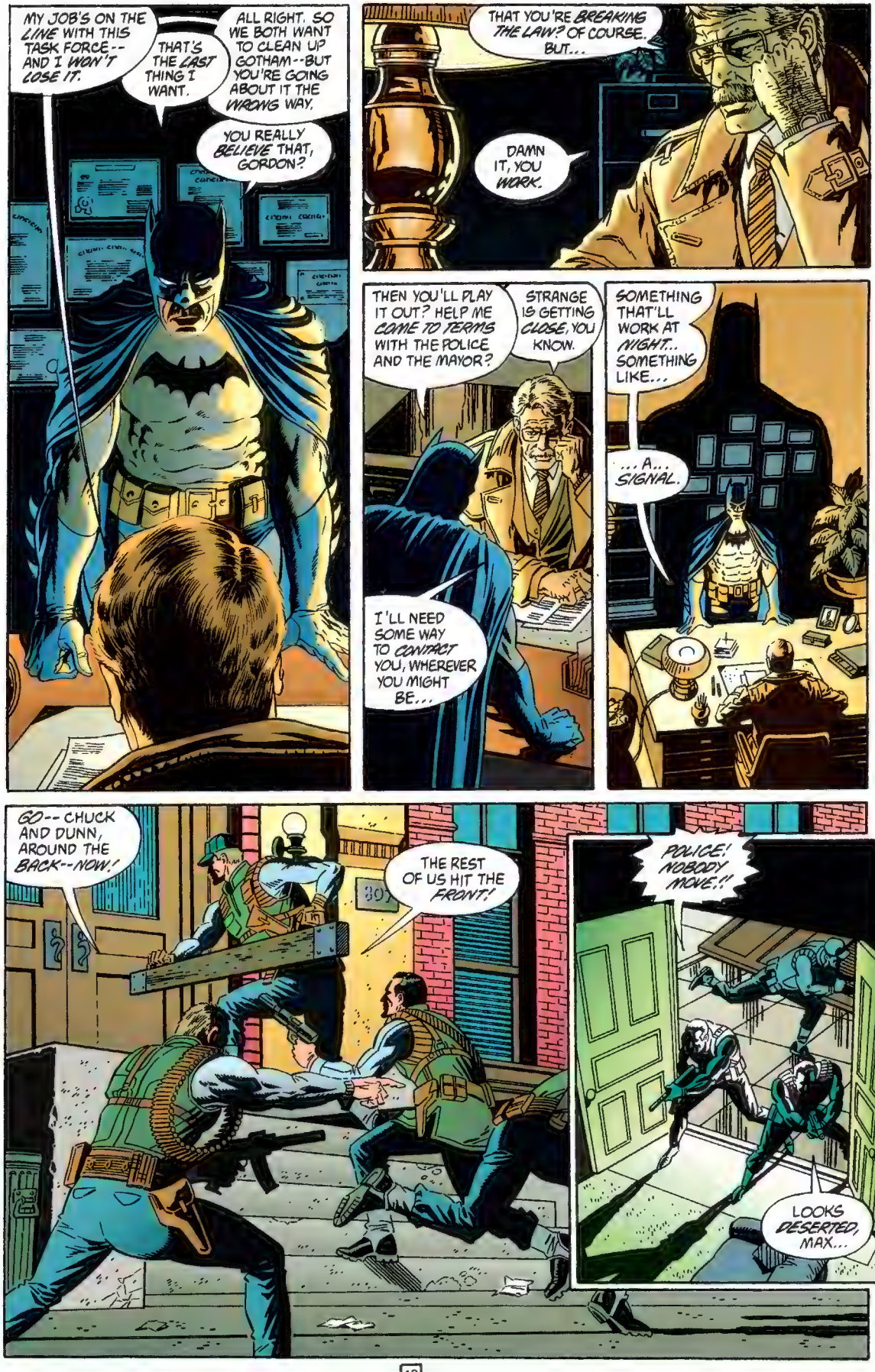

"THE ONE CRIME THE BAT-MAN CAN NEVER STOP," DR. HUGO STRANGE STATED TODAY. "IS THE ONE THAT STARTED HIM." WHAT THAT CRIME MAY HAVE BEEN IS UNKNOWN, BUT THE FAMED PSYCHIATRIST BELIEVES IT HOLDS THE KEY TO THE DARK VIGILANTE'S TRUE IDENTITY.
DR. STRANGE SPECULATES: "IN ALL PROBABILITY IT WAS A CRIME OF EXTREME VIOLENCE -- I'M CERTAIN BLOOD WAS INVOLVED -- WHICH WAS COMMITTED IN DARKNESS."
CONSULTANT TO THE MAYOR'S VIGILANTE TASK FORCE, STRANGE HAS UNIQUE ACCESS TO POLICE DATA AND FEELS CONFIDENT HE CAN IDENTIFY "THE CATALYTIC CRIME AND THEREBY THE RESULTING MAN HIMSELF."
UP NEXT -- THE NEW CAT BURGLAR: NOW TWO CREATURES OF THE NIGHT PROWL GOTHAM...

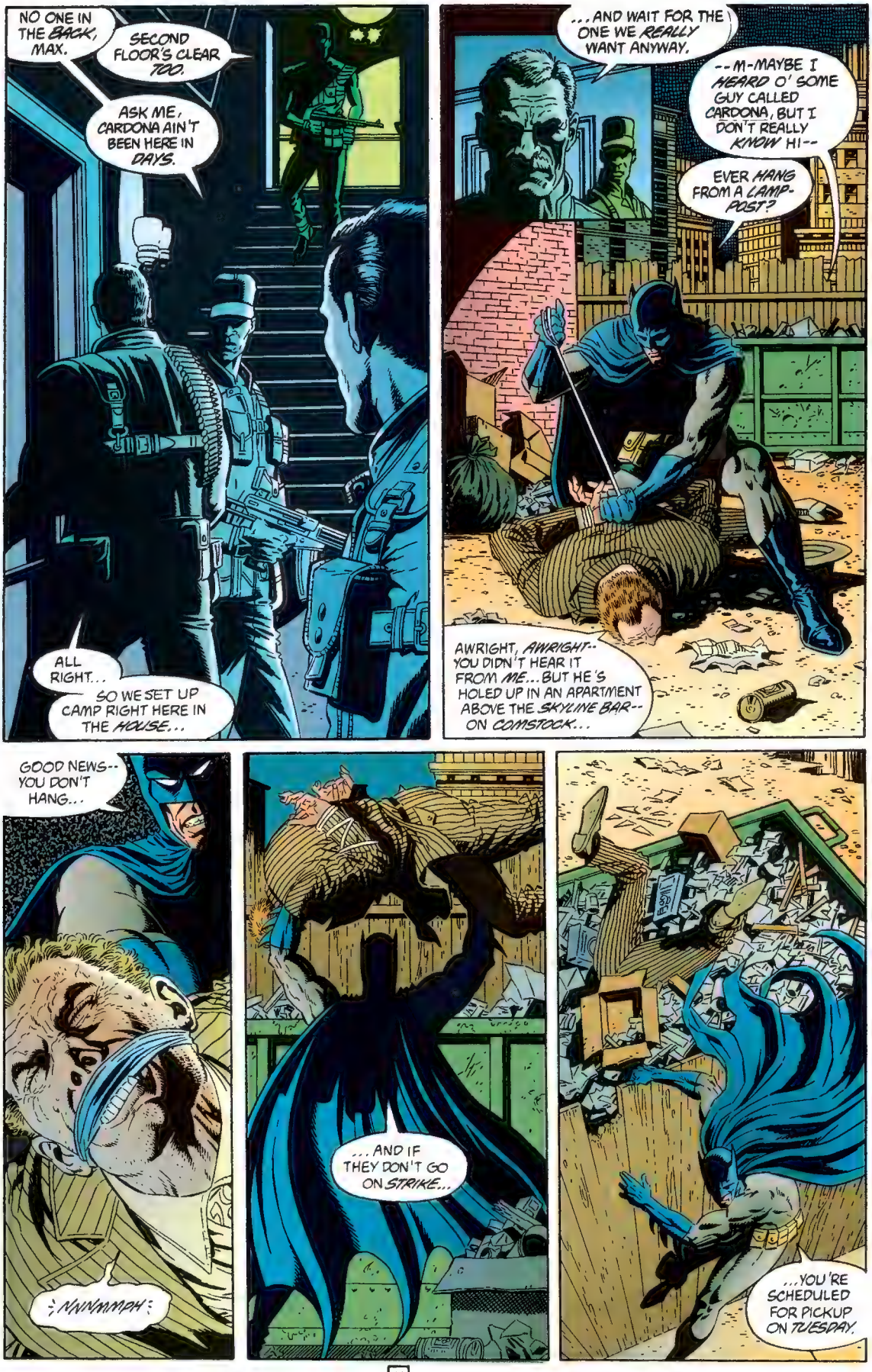
As far as "escalating media mind-games" go, it's not bad... but I can't afford to let it get under my "psyche's skin"...
Tonight I've got a bigger fish to fry...
...although in the end, Hugo Strange may prove to be the real shark.

PUTTING IN SOME OVERTIME TONIGHT, SGT. CORT?
YOU MIGHT SAY THAT, CAPTAIN GORDON.
LOT OF HARDWARE FOR ONE LONELY DOPE PUSHER.
THE WARRANT FOR MANNY "THE FISH" CARDONA FINALLY CAME DOWN.

YOU EXPECTING TO RUN INTO SOMEONE ELSE?
LET'S JUST SAY WE WANT TO BE READY FOR ANYTHING, CAPTAIN...


IF THE VIGILANTE HAS THE SAME IDEA ABOUT HAULIN' IN CARDONA WE'LL BE WAI--
WHATEVER "CRIMES" THE BATMAN MAY OR MAY NOT HAVE COMMITTED--
--NONE ARE CAPITAL, SGT. CORT.
NO SHOOTING.
I can almost feel the steam from his ears...
COME ON, MEN.
LET'S ROLL.
DON'T WORRY, GORDON...
THEY WON'T RUN INTO ME OR THE FISH.
WH--?
HE'S IN HIDING-- HASN'T BEEN TO HIS HOME SINCE YOUR MEN INTERFERED AT THE WAREHOUSE--NO ONE HAS.
IF I'D BEEN LEFT ALONE, MANNY THE FISH WOULD BE IN YOUR JAIL RIGHT NOW.
THEY INTERFERED--?
OR YOU MIGHT BE DEAD-- INSTEAD OF KEEPING ROUND-THE-CLOCK SURVEILLANCE ON CARDONA'S HOUSE.
NO SURVEILLANCE.
I PLANTED A RECORDER INSIDE.
THE TAPE'S BLANK-- NOT SO MUCH AS THE JIGGLE OF A DOORKNOB.
YOU'RE SOMETHING, YOU ARE.
YOU DON'T APPROVE?
OF YOU BREAKING AND ENTERING-- OR OF ME BEING IN THIS HOTSEAT?
AND DON'T THINK I'M KIDDING...


MY JOB'S ON THE LINE WITH THIS TASK FORCE-- AND I WON'T LOSE IT.
THAT'S THE LAST THING I WANT.
ALL RIGHT. SO WE BOTH WANT TO CLEAN UP GOTHAM--BUT YOU'RE GOING ABOUT IT THE WRONG WAY.
YOU REALLY BELIEVE THAT, GORDON?
THAT YOU'RE BREAKING THE LAW? OF COURSE. BUT...
DAMN IT, YOU WORK.
THEN YOU'LL PLAY IT OUT? HELP ME COME TO TERMS WITH THE POLICE AND THE MAYOR?
STRANGE IS GETTING CLOSE, YOU KNOW.
I'LL NEED SOME WAY TO CONTACT YOU, WHEREVER YOU MIGHT BE...
SOMETHING THAT'LL WORK AT NIGHT... SOMETHING LIKE...
... A... SIGNAL.
GO-- CHUCK AND DUNN, AROUND THE BACK--NOW!
THE REST OF US HIT THE FRONT!
POLICE! NOBODY MOVE!!
LOOKS DESERTED, MAX...


NO ONE IN THE BACK, MAX.
SECOND FLOOR'S CLEAR TOO.
ASK ME, CARDONA AIN'T BEEN HERE IN DAYS.
ALL RIGHT...
SO WE SET UP CAMP RIGHT HERE IN THE HOUSE...
...AND WAIT FOR THE ONE WE REALLY WANT ANYWAY.
--M-MAYBE I HEARD O' SOME GUY CALLED CARDONA, BUT I DON'T REALLY KNOW HI--
EVER HANG FROM A LAMP-POST?
AWRIGHT, AWRIGHT-- YOU DIDN'T HEAR IT FROM ME... BUT HE'S HOLED UP IN AN APARTMENT ABOVE THE SKYLINE BAR-- ON COMSTOCK...
GOOD NEWS-- YOU DON'T HANG...
:NNNMMPH:
...AND IF THEY DON'T GO ON STRIKE...
...YOU'RE SCHEDULED FOR PICKUP ON TUESDAY.

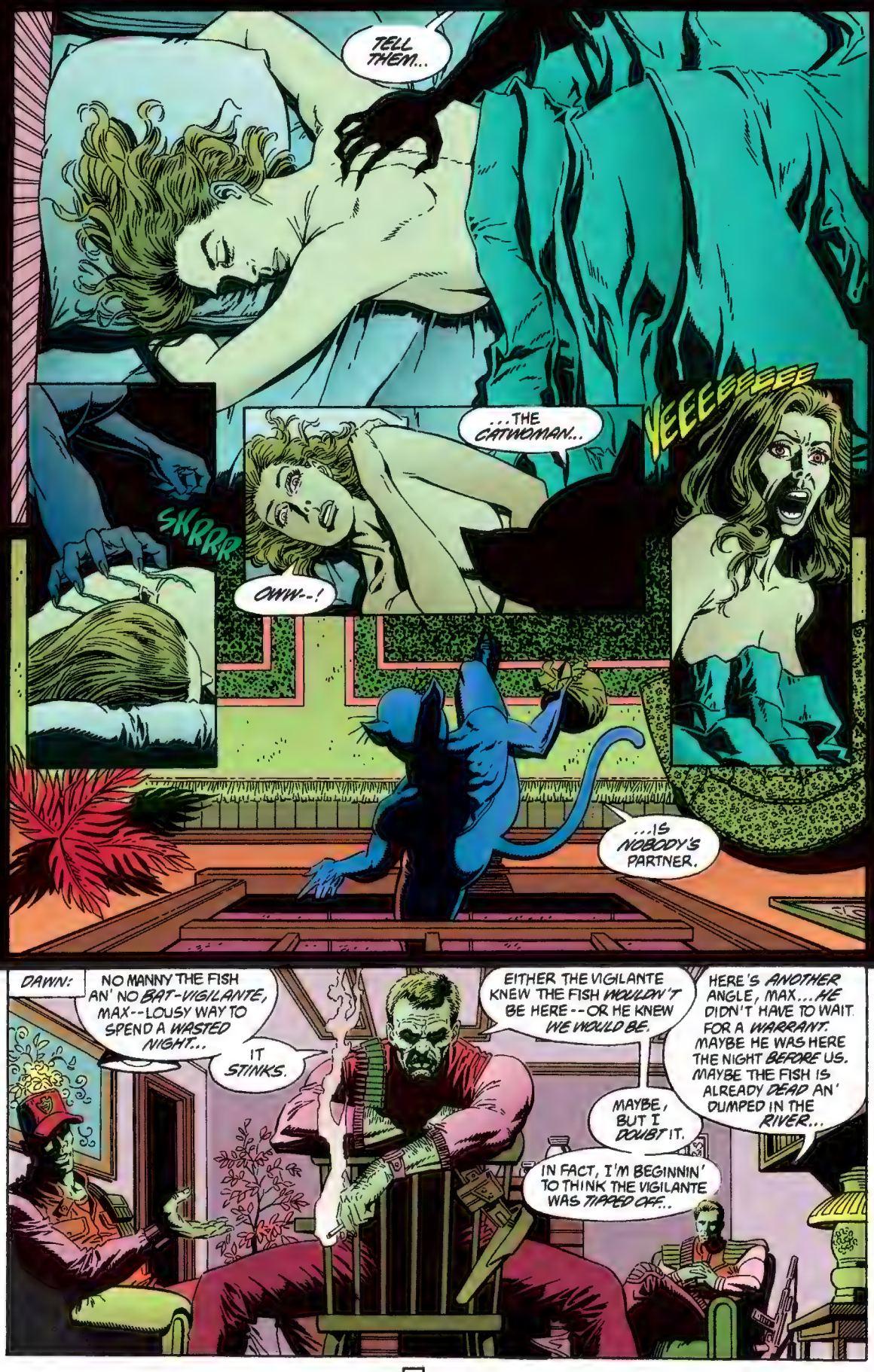
LEFT TURN
"SO THEN I SAYS TO HER, I SAYS: DON'T YOU GET IT--?"
Skyline Bar
FOOD • COCKTAILS
8TH ST. DELI
--AND THEN SUSIE DROPPED THE OMELETTE ON RAY'S FOOT!
AIN'T THAT A SCREAM, HONEY?-- BUT JANET, SHE DIN'T EVEN CRACK A--
SHHH!
STAY HERE AN' KEEP QUIET.

THICH
YAHRRRR
PEECH
BAOUM
BAOUM
BAOUM
CHVEW
SPRAKT
WHERE THE HELL--?
BEHIND THE WHALE.
URG-K

BLASH
SWAKT
RUUAHHH--
KRATCH
TUD
SKFF
UHRRR
CHUD!

SPLAMM
KRAKT
COME ON.
COME ON AN' BLEED, FREAK.
SHUMP
OOOPH
WHOK
:HIIIHH:
HAH!
KUNCH!

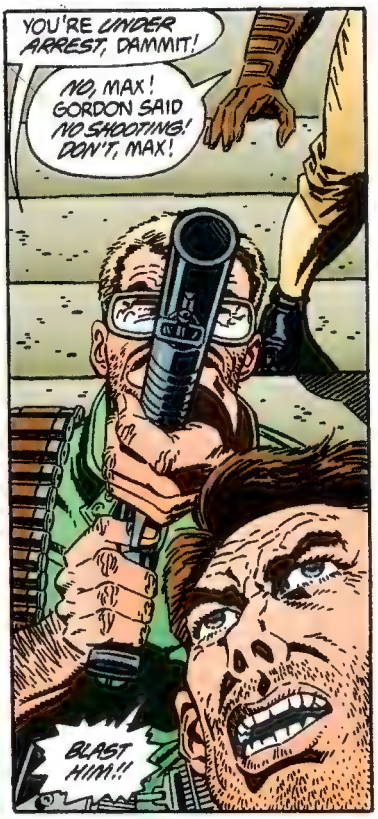
FRAKT
SWOKT
WHUMP
K-K-KKKRUMP!
The whale has been beached.
And now...
EEEEEEEE
HE NEEDS HIS PANTS.

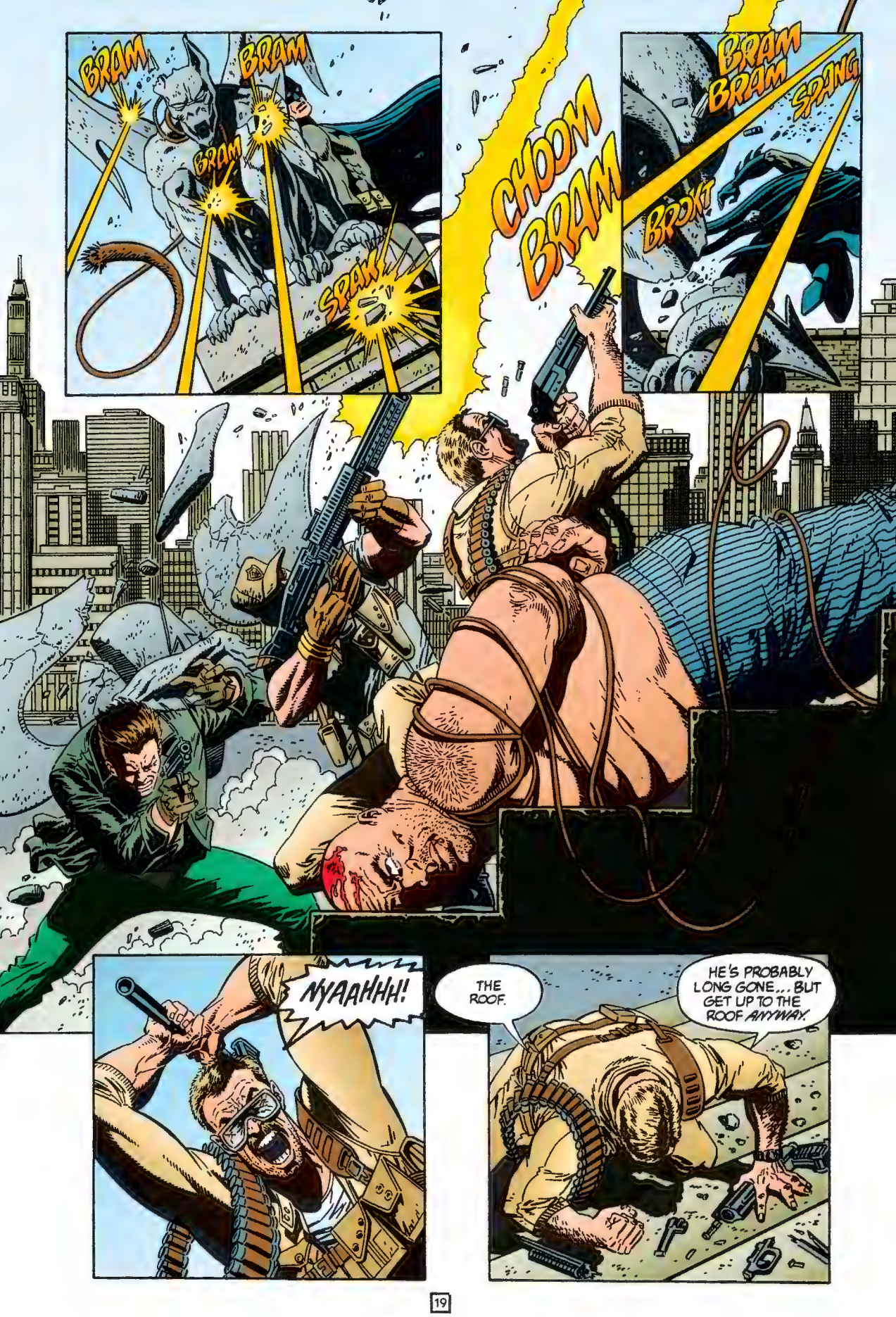

TELL THEM...
...THE CATWOMAN...
YEEEEEEEE
SKRRR
OWW--!
...IS NOBODY'S PARTNER.
DAWN:
NO MANNY THE FISH AN' NO BAT-VIGILANTE, MAX--LOUSY WAY TO SPEND A WASTED NIGHT...
IT STINKS.
EITHER THE VIGILANTE KNEW THE FISH WOULDN'T BE HERE--OR HE KNEW WE WOULD BE.
MAYBE, BUT I DOUBT IT.
HERE'S ANOTHER ANGLE, MAX... HE DIDN'T HAVE TO WAIT FOR A WARRANT. MAYBE HE WAS HERE THE NIGHT BEFORE US. MAYBE THE FISH IS ALREADY DEAD AN' DUMPED IN THE RIVER...
IN FACT, I'M BEGINNIN' TO THINK THE VIGILANTE WAS TIPPED OFF..

GOTHAM GAZETTE
BAT-MAN IN TAVERN ROBBERY?
LET HIM HOG THE HEAD-LINES...
THIS IS A FRONT PAGE I CAN LIVE WITH.
POLICE HQ:
HE AIN'T SOME "SUPERNATURAL CREATURE"-- SO IF HE SEEMS LIKE ONE, IT ONLY MEANS HE'S GETTIN' INSIDE HELP.
BAT-SUIT AN' BAT-GLIDER OR NOT, NO ONE PULLS OFF THE--
NOW.

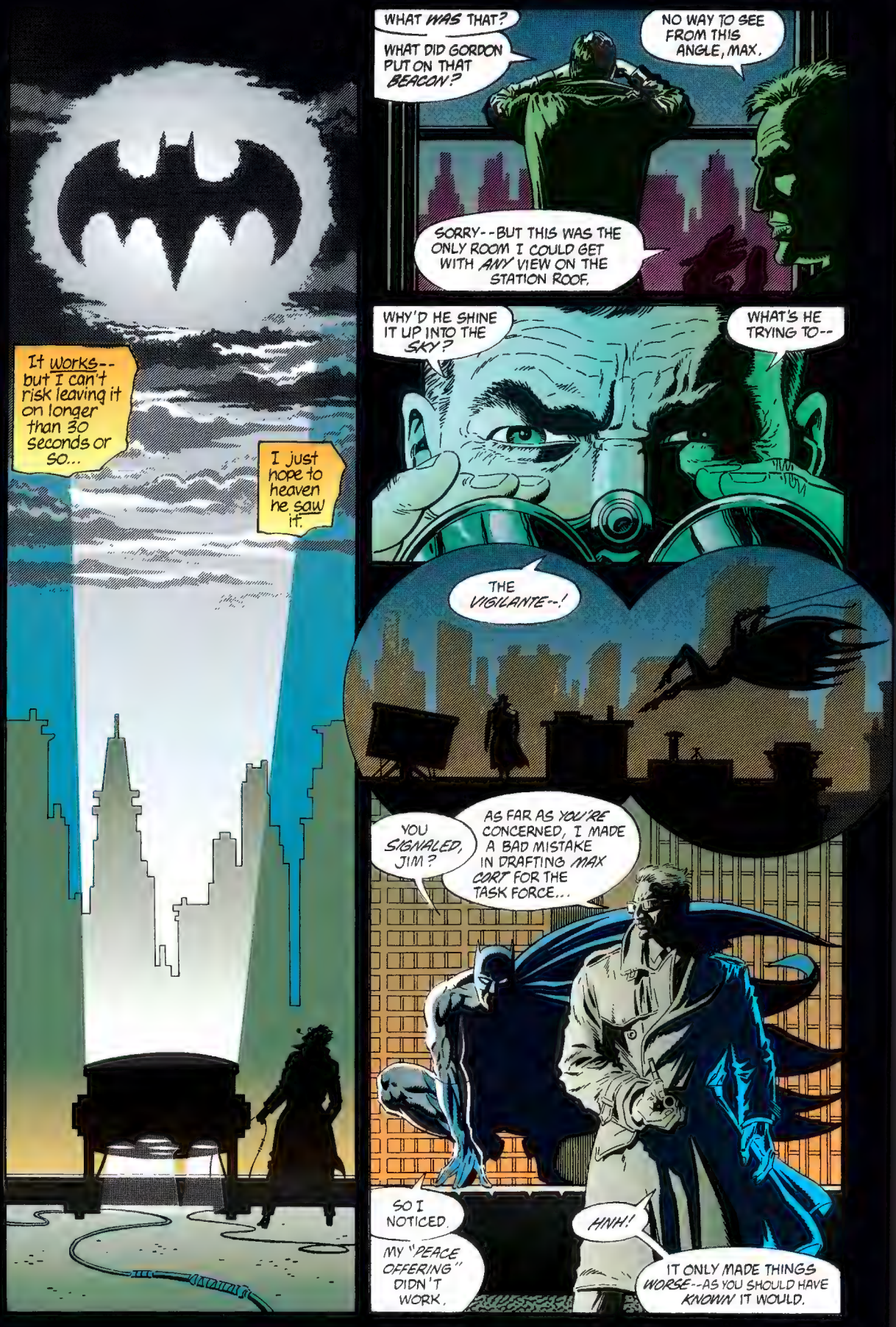
--IMPOSSIBLE?
A PEACE OFFERING.

WE'RE ON THE SAME SIDE.
IT'S HIM!
BOTH OF 'EM!

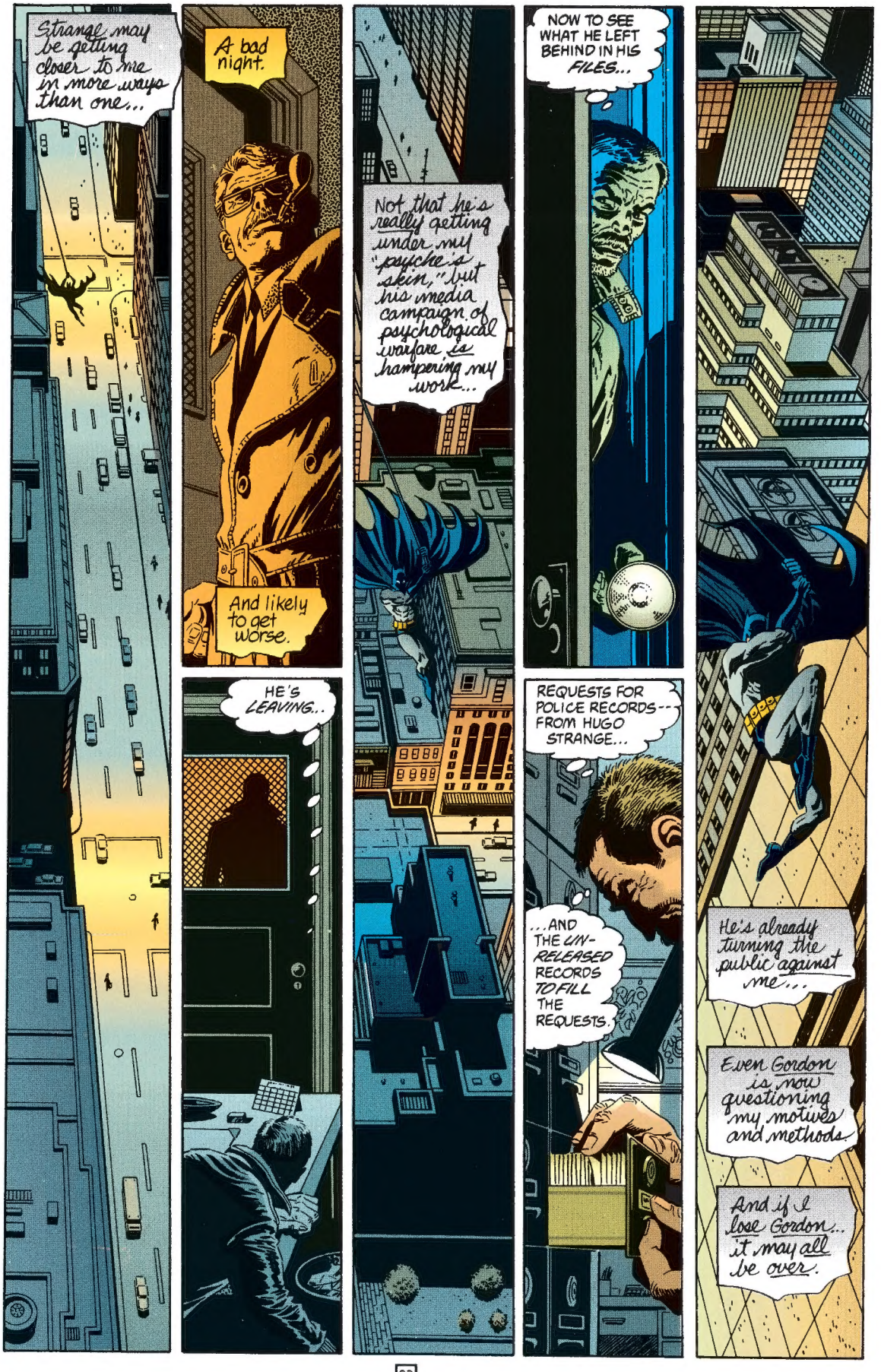

YOU'RE UNDER ARREST, DAMMIT!
NO, MAX! GORDON SAID NO SHOOTINGS! DON'T, MAX!
BLAST HIM!!

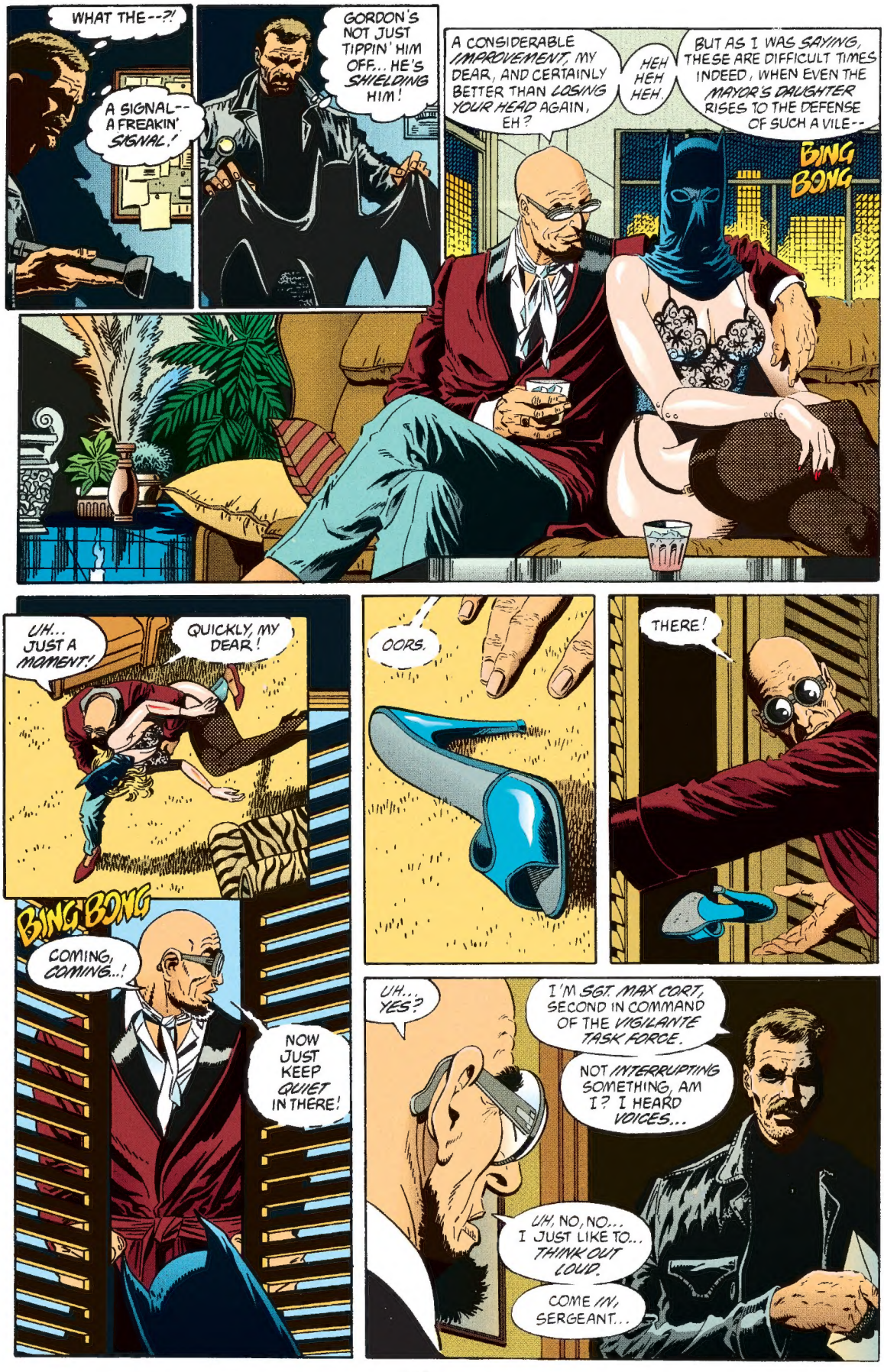

BRAM
BRAM
BRAM
SPAK
CHOOM
BRAM
BRAM
BRAM
SPANG
BROK!
NYAAHHH!
THE ROOF.
HE'S PROBABLY LONG GONE... BUT GET UP TO THE ROOF ANYWAY.

CANCEL THE REST OF THE DAY'S SESSIONS, FLORENCE, AND GET THE MAYOR ON THE PHONE.
MR. MAYOR--? OH... I WANTED TO SPEAK TO THE MAYOR PERSONAL--YES, YES, I REALIZE HE'S A BUSY MAN, BUT RIGHT NOW I'M BUSY ON THE MOST IMPORTANT MATTER EVER TO FACE THIS CITY...
...SO YOU JUST TELL THE MAYOR I NEED THOSE REQUESTED POLICE RECORDS NOW.
I'M CLOSE TO A SOLUTION HERE, BUT THE RECORDS PROVIDED ARE INCOMPLETE. I WAS ASSURED FULL ACCESS--AND I DEMAND NOTHING LESS.
WHY DO THE COPPERS WANT THIS UP HERE?
MAYBE THEY'RE EXPECTIN' AN AIR RAID.
FROM THE LOOKS O' THAT GARGOYLE OVER THERE, THEY ALREADY HAD ONE.
NIGHT:
FIRE ESCAPE


It works--but I can't risk leaving it on longer than 30 seconds or so...
I just hope to heaven he saw it.
WHAT WAS THAT?
WHAT DID GORDON PUT ON THAT BEACON?
NO WAY TO SEE FROM THIS ANGLE, MAX.
SORRY--BUT THIS WAS THE ONLY ROOM I COULD GET WITH ANY VIEW ON THE STATION ROOF.
WHY'D HE SHINE IT UP INTO THE SKY?
WHAT'S HE TRYING TO--
THE VIGILANTE--!
YOU SIGNALED, JIM?
AS FAR AS YOU'RE CONCERNED, I MADE A BAD MISTAKE IN DRAFTING MAX CORT FOR THE TASK FORCE...
SO I NOTICED.
MY "PEACE OFFERING" DIDN'T WORK.
HNH!
IT ONLY MADE THINGS WORSE--AS YOU SHOULD HAVE KNOWN IT WOULD.

A COP WITH HIS PRIDE... WERE YOU TRYING TO TAUNT HIM?
I WAS BEING WHAT I AM.
WHAT YOU ARE IS A PRIME TARGET FOR MAX CORT.
AND DON'T MAKE THE MISTAKE OF SELLING HIM SHORT, AS I DID.
HE'S DANGEROUS-- MAYBE VERGING ON THE PSYCHOTIC...
GORDON'S THE ONE!
ALL ALONG, IT'S BEEN GORDON!
HE HATES YOU WITH ALL THE GUTS HE'S GOT--AND THAT'S SAYING SOMETHING.
HE'S ALSO GETTING SUSPICIOUS THAT YOU'RE BEING TIPPED OFF.
ANYTHING ELSE?
YES! PLENTY! THE WHOLE THING IS COMING APART! HUGO STRANGE IS IN BED WITH THE MAYOR!
WORSE THAN THAT, HE'S DEFINITELY ON THE RIGHT TRACK-- AND ASKING FOR ALL THE RIGHT INFO TO REACH THE FINISH LINE!
ANY SUGGESTIONS?
NONE.
AND THIS MAY HAVE BEEN THE LAST WARNING I CAN GIVE YOU.


Strange may be getting closer to me in more ways than one...
A bad night.
And likely to get worse.
Not that he's really getting under my "psyche's skin," but his media campaign of psychological warfare is hampering my work...
NOW TO SEE WHAT HE LEFT BEHIND IN HIS FILES...
He's already turning the public against me...
Even Gordon is now questioning my motives and methods.
And if I lose Gordon... it may all be over.
HE'S LEAVING...
REQUESTS FOR POLICE RECORDS-- FROM HUGO STRANGE...
...AND THE UN-RELEASED RECORDS TO FILL THE REQUESTS.


WHAT THE--?!
A SIGNAL--A FREAKIN' SIGNAL!
GORDON'S NOT JUST TIPPIN' HIM OFF... HE'S SHIELDING HIM!
A CONSIDERABLE IMPROVEMENT, MY DEAR, AND CERTAINLY BETTER THAN LOSING YOUR HEAD AGAIN, EH?
HEH HEH HEH.
BUT AS I WAS SAYING, THESE ARE DIFFICULT TIMES INDEED, WHEN EVEN THE MAYOR'S DAUGHTER RISES TO THE DEFENSE OF SUCH A VILE--
BING BONG
UH... JUST A MOMENT!
QUICKLY, MY DEAR!
OORS.
THERE!
BING BONG
COMING, COMING...!
NOW JUST KEEP QUIET IN THERE!
UH... YES?
I'M SGT. MAX CORT, SECOND IN COMMAND OF THE VIGILANTE TASK FORCE.
NOT INTERRUPTING SOMETHING, AM I? I HEARD VOICES...
UH, NO, NO... I JUST LIKE TO... THINK OUT LOUD.
COME IN, SERGEANT...

TWO GLASSES... YOU SURE YOU DON'T HAVE COMPANY, DR. STRANGE?
OH, I, UH, I ALWAYS POUR MYSELF TWO-- SAVES ME THE TROUBLE OF GETTING UP LATER.
BUT HELP YOURSELF, SERGEANT, AND TELL ME WHAT BRINGS YOU HERE...
THESE POLICE RECORDS YOU REQUESTED-- THOUGHT I'D BETTER DELIVER 'EM PERSONALLY.
IT'S ABOUT TIME.
I REALIZE THE POLICE DEPARTMENT IS A HIDEBOUND BUREAUCRACY, BUT--
THE DEPARTMENT AIN'T THAT INEFFICIENT, DOC.
THOSE REPORTS HAVE BEEN HELD BACK-- SUPPRESSED-- BY CAPTAIN JAMES GORDON... HEAD OF THE TASK FORCE.
ARE YOU... SERIOUS--?
NEVER MORE SO. BUT WITH YOUR CONNECTIONS TO THE MAYOR, WE CAN BRING GORDON DOWN--
--THEN NAIL THE VIGILANTE ONCE AN' FOR ALL!
AND PERHAPS SECURE YOURSELF A PROMOTION IN THE PROCESS, SERGEANT?
THERE'LL BE A VACANCY TO FILL, WON'T THERE?
I'VE GOT AMBITIONS.
STILL... IT'D BE YOUR WORD AGAINST GORDON'S.
THAT MEAN YOU WON'T HELP?
ON THE CONTRARY... IT SIMPLY MEANS I HAVE A BETTER IDEA.
YOU'RE A BIG MAN, SGT. MAX CORT, AND I DOUBT YOU'RE AFRAID OF THE DARK.
TELL ME...
...ARE YOU AS STRONG AND ATHLETIC AS YOU LOOK?
TO BE CONTINUED